

As infinite pity went not loward the old woman, bassed by sorrow. "He wyore may ridid?" said the judge.

## Extenuating Circumstances By Maurice Level

Illustrated by W.T. Benda

Figuresise learned that her son had been arrested.

At first she was unable to believe it;

Her lad, her birtle lad, so well-behaved, so shy, who just a month upo had spent his Enster beave with her; her son a third and murderer) . . . She seemed to see him standing before her again in his soldier's uniform, his round young face entiting and kind; she felt again on her wrighted checks his bearty good-by kiness, and, filled with happy and peaceful memories of him, also shrugged her shoulders, repeating:

"Of marse it's a mistake. It's someone else." Sill, there it was written with a hig headlase. "Ofme of a Soldier." It had happened in his hat-

racks, and his name one there in hill.

Bewildred, she cronched in ser chair, her speciales pushed up on her forehead, her hands classes, her mouth frembling as she talked to be self in the varies sileace of the kitchen, her eyes looking tagnety at the old dog lying by the open door, at the tall clock whose

old dog lying by the open door, at the full clock whose slow the ige gravily marked the time.

Someone came in. She started violently, crying, "Who's them?" Re-regulating a mileblor, and vishing to hide her agitation, she added:

"I was askep ... It's hot.

Il abitually reserved and silicut, to day she went on calling taking a day of mention and silicut, and we she went on calling taking a day of mention, and with provider

(alking, talking, asking questions and making replies, learing that she berself might be questioned. As she uttered her disjoint of sentences, become thought sins: Does she know?

Enable at last to think at anything old to say, she relapsed into silence. With an odd expression, the neighbor saids

" In R dong since you had several year on?" " Sa . . . This morning."

She did not say how! But an she spoke there cause to her an overwhelming desire to be reasonal, to be conserted, to lear a voice of his her indiguous : " It's a mistake! It's not my hely how would it be?

"He held out the paper, and trying to speak easily:
"Have you seen this?". Queer, isn') it?"
He throat dry, the trace welling up in her eyes, she

"I was so stuple ... When I saw it dest it gave be quite a turn! ... What a had! ..." The neighbor still renamed sitem. She repeated: "But it's strange, isn't it? ... It's strange! ..." "Yes, it's odd there should be two of the same name. in the same regiment."

WITH a great sigh of relief the old woman cried: 

soman. "I'm only asking cou. . It's to be hoped there are . because if it syop hat . They are saying it was limit that rabbed the moper . es, the three bandred frames that were stolen when he was

The mother drex heiselt up stiffly, white as death.
"How dare they! He never did it never, ver! Area't you ashumed of yourseld?". If hat have we done to you that you put everything an

dy poor little last . . . Ch. for too the laste ago:

And without shutting the door behind her. without even putting on her sabots, she hurried, almost running, to the mileny station.

SHE arrived as the town just as is was striking seven.

In the train instead of diminishing, her fears had grown. She was no longer saying: "It is impossible!" but "Suppose it is true! . . "The journey had account endless, with the villages and tields runhing. ing past her, the idegraph poles vising and falling goldally like a swing. When the train stopped she br-gan to tremble, almost feeling that the mannest to w the truth had come too quickly. She was mucmaring Paters and Aves, adding her own supplications to the prayers that came mechanically to her lips:

O, kind Virgin, you could never have let such a thing hoppen, could you. . . . The beautiful prayers I shall say to you presently! . . . . Behind the fron gate the courtyant of the hornicks

stretched white in front of the square buildings. Soldiers were sitting on the steps, chatting in the eve ning calm. Her boy had taught her the different ranks. She stopped, saving timidly:

Excuse me, Moreigurle Screent, I want to ask you something. I want to know. . . .

She hesitated, not daring to show her fear,
"It's this. It's about my son . . . Jules Micken
of the and Compagnic . . . I want to know if . . . If
I can see him? . . . .

She tried to smile

"I are his mother . . . his mother . . No." But
why? Where is he' . . Is he ill? Then
why can't I? . . Ves, I know . . . No. I should
been Ue has been (Candaded in page 76)

Original from



## "\$100 a Week! Think What That Manas To Us!"

"They've made me Juperintendent— and doubled my entary! Now weens have the conforbance pleasures we'vedreamed of—our own horse, a maid for you, Mell, and so more werrying about tim cost of lighted.

"The president called me in index and told me. He said be picked ma for pre-motion three meaths age when he learned I was studying at home with the later-mational Correspondence Schools. How my chance has come—and masks to the I. C. S. I'm ready for II."

Thousands of non naw have the jay of bappy, prosperous houses because they let the hearm-incal Correspondence Schools account them in more hears for bagger work and sense pag.

Why don't you study nome one thing and go why by a real job, at a miley that will give you it and children the things you would like these have?

which and children the things you would like those to the and children the things you would like the those to the act of the continue you would be the twenty real the best and the 1. C.S. will properly you four right to your was to see to your real marks that.

The your was do if, there then two you have been done to you have not you would be to you would be to you would be to have you do not right you. Withink observed the part to you have been seen as series to you would be to have you as series to right you. The part to you would be to have you as series to right you. The part to you would be to have you as series to real the your would be not have you as series to you would be to you you will be to have you will be to have you will be not been to you you will be not been you as the part to you will be not you will be not been you as you will be not been you will be not been you as you will be not been you as you will be not been you will be not be not been you will be not be not been you will be not be not be not been Control of the Contro TAPE MANAG PATOLET DESIGNATION AND DESIGN

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## Extenuating Circumstances

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THE ORDE

COLLECTOR

MAURICE

LEVEL.

Jo ele Secondor ima of History's

She hid her hace in her hands: Holy Virgin, it was true then! Bloly Virgin;

STAGGERING, she berned away. At the military prison the barned that her son was in solitary confinement, and the word solitary increased her terror. She instinct him above, barever shat away from everyone, fastened in. They told her to go used see a hawyer, and with the same assuady steps she went and bound a lawyer. From him she beared the court state of officier. These was no missible dealt above. allidy. There was no manife death should allidy a distribute in the bay had foliad sensors to not them; they had found the money—searly six hundred feature—it his waterness. He had melesed.

After much weeping and useless begging to be allowed to see him, she went back to the

eillage. Everyone knew. Shrinking from what they might say be her, right say to ber, dreading their books, she did not so bense till mid-sight. Lite a poor animal who lears blows and hides itself, she dare so longer go out, keeping her shuttens desed, trembling asshe lifted the paper that was pushed under the door every norming. Fromit she learned not only all the details of the crime, was accessed at the evidence seemed to prove that it really was be who had subled the cooper. But would seem it was

not tract . . . But eventually she began to have doubte about

At the end of a mouth size west back to the

At the end of a mounts are west war, to the lawyer. She no longer collect to me her son.

Not, great God, that she had ceased to love him! She was acharmed.

"What will they do with him, Mountered You won't let them take him from me."

"My poor woman, I am vory much afraid they will. If only I could find some extensating circumstance."

"What had a forementance what

"What's that? A circumstance does it mean?"

'It means something that will be crime in the eyes of the judge. Here is an example—a main steals; if it can be proved that he did it because he was in great poverty, had to clinit occasion to so in great poverty, hecanic his children were starving, that would be an extensisting circumstance. In this case there's nothing of the kind. It's not even his first ofense. That other rabbery—be denies it—but—wel, well, I will do everything that can possibly be done."

PRANCOISE went home wearler and more heartbookes than ever, her mind tottured by those sew words: "Extenuating circum-stances." How, where, could she find some excuse that would move the judges to clerisecy? . . . There was none. She could see sothing but the crime: sething could leave

its horror.

The day of the trial cares. She set out gain, the last step in the ascent of her Calvary. In the train she prayed, invoking all the saints, while through her empty beain there resumded the words, so often repeated: Extensiting circumstances . . . Ettens-

in a moment her eyes were on her boy, who bowed his head over a handkerchie with big bliss aquares, and horst insolvent, sharp sole. . . She drew letted! up stiffly and faced the officer who presided as Judge.

She henelf had asked to go into the wit-She hentell had asked to go tree the watered raguely why she had insisted. She knew sorting to may. Why was the there? For an arrower at all about it; she had nothing to may. Why was the there? For an arrower at all except that she was his mother. Was it not she who had bottle him a muraed him a care and him he may be to the contract.

Was had been the had bottle him. was it see any was not done for, wursed him. brought him up? ... Washe net hers, her very own? ... But no, not now; to lay he did no helong to her.

To all the questions the splitd by signs at unintelligible words. There was demo-illone in the court. An infinite pity went sat toward the all Mack-ribed primant "He is your only child?" mid the judge.

"Yes, Stoneour."
"Del you have anything to complain al when he lived with you?"
"Oh no, Mendeur, never?"
"Had be one had

"Had be my had compations!" "Never His latter, who was liked and respected by everyone, would not have allowed it ... Nother would I ... We were very highly thought of ...... We know

we know ..

THEN turning to the prisener "You knew it, why, screening yoursell behind the good reputation of your parents, you took advantage of your stay with your mother to commit a rottury . . . How could anyone suspect the son of such hotest people? . . . Others may be able to say: 'I are not wholly responsible. I lived with people who set me a had et-

I lived with people who set me a had everythe." You, you have no such exemen." At this the old norman seemed to make a violent effort. A strange light above under the tear-excellen lids of her small eyes and, her head bowed, without a gesture, in a role that was almost steady, she spoke. "Forgive out, Montieur. I see I must tell you the trath. My poor lad is guilty of much, very guilty. But he in not the only one. I told you just now I had nothing to spreach suguelf with. I lied. The spoor france of the cooper's, it was I who stole floor, one. When my John care home at Easter I told him I had some it. It rightened him, poor had, he is very young ... he saw his mother night locker hand and her teputation. ... and it was to get the money back and stop my bring arrested that he stole that other money. He was interrupted. ... He had and he strack the bloor without knowner that he cod."

SHE was silest for a moment, out of breath:

then west on in a lower time:

"I lied . . I am a wicked woman. It
mas I who set him the had example . . It
is I you must arrest . Is that an exlensating circumstance for him! . For
give me, Monsiers .

More howel than ever, the shouldestoping, the head lower, she secured to

ificink to nothing ... The son escaped with hard labor for life. Soon afterward she died, scorned by all They said a hasty mass for her and hid her in a remote part of the gravey and, a corner where even on the sunniest days the shadow of church or belley does not much

THIS story was told me at her grave, which I had nothing to stramout it but a cross of weatherbeatenblack wood and a single wreath of netty bade, twisted and hoden, on which, lowever, I could distinguish the words:
"To Française Mission. From the judge who kind for you."

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